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TRUE

RELATION

OF

JOHNSON (J.)

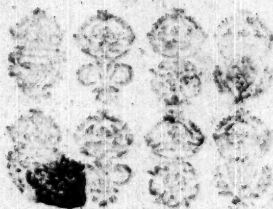

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Most Wonderfull and Strange accident, which
 happened on a young man, born at Dort a
 Town in Holland, who travelling between
 Franckfort and Antwerp, was falsely accused
 for a Robberie, and executed for the same at
 a Town called Bon, where he hangd five days,
 and was by G O D mightily preserved, to
 the great astonishment of all Beholders,



RELATION



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*A True Relation of the
Wonderfull mercy of God,
in preserving one alive, be-
ing banged five days. who
was falsly accused.*

IN the Town of *Dort* upon the long
Reed Bank (neer the signe of the
three pigeons) there dwelled a
man whose name was *John Peter-
son* born in the citie of *Antwerp*, who
married with a young woman born at
Dort aforesaid, This *John Peterson* with
his wife lived many years together, he
being a waterman who used to ferry
passengers from *Dort* to *Rotterdam*, and
his wife used the Trade of dressing of
Flax: These two having had divers
children, it pleased God that all dyed sa-
ving two sonnes, whose names were,
the one *Nicholas John-son*, who
now dwelleth at the *Brill*, the other
John John-son (for often they take
their

(4)
their surnames of their Fathers Christi-
an name) of which *John Johnson*, we
are hereafter to intreat, whose parents
died in the year of our Lord 1600, be-
ing very poore.

This *John Paterfon* being deceased
having a brother yet dwelling in the
Citie of *Antwerp*, who understanding
of the death of his brother, sent to *Dort*
for *John Johnson*, the youngest son of
his brother deceased (being a pretty
youth) who thought it fitter to keep one
of his own kinsmen, than the son of any
stranger. When this youth came to *An-
twerp*, his Uncle gave him very kind
wellcome, being joyfull to see him, for
he had never seen him before that time.
Now it pleased his Uncle to imploy this
John Johnson, about his affairs, who used
such diligence in all things he went a-
bout that he procured such love of his
Uncle, as if he had been his dear child,
he could never have respected him with
more regard: and the rather for that he
gave his mind to all virtuous and godly
exercises, in so much that whatsoever the
young man did, it was most pleasing to
his Uncle, as also to most who knew him:
He was many times assailed by *Jesuits*
(and others of that Religion) to convert
him

him from the true Religion which he then professed, but he continuing constant, by no means would yeeld unto them, which being bruited in the citie, he was of all the godly generally well respected.

To come to the mater: His Uncle being a man of great trading in Merchandize, had occasion (with divers other Merchands) to travel to *Frankfort* Mart in *October* last, for he used much to go thither, and thought it fit to take his Kinsman *John Johnson* along with him, to acquaint him in those parts, that he might the better afterwards have knowledge in his business, and his Uncle delighted greatly in his Company, by reason he was given to much honest mirth, for which all that knew him did exceedingly affect him, and called him the *Hollander*, demanding often of him, if all *Hollanders* were so pleasant as himself was, passing on the way? After their long journey, they came to *Frankfort*, every man taking his leave of other, intending to go about their affairs. And after some few days of their continuance in *Frankfort*, there came a letter to this *John Johnsons* Uncle (from *Antwerp* to certifie him

him of business of great import, which was Speedily to be dispatched at home: whereupon his Uncle, having as yet effected little business, did think it most convenient to lend the said *John Johnson* to *Antwerp*, (knowing his sufficient care in any of his imployments) whilst he himself stayed till the end of the *May*. Now having commandment of his Uncle to depart for *Antwerp*, he took his leave, and set forward on his journey without any fear, for he had little to loose & taking his journeys to the same Towns & Inns where before he with his uncle & other Merchants had lyen: At length he came to *Bon*, beside *Colen*: to the same Inn where he before had lodged, which was near the market place, at the sign of the *Swan* without suspect of any danger, where also lodged divers merchants with whom this *John Johnson* that night supped, having had very good fare, And passing the time away with very pleasant discourses, until it grew towards bed time & being shewed their chamber the young man desired the Host that he would call him up very early, who promising so to do, departed. This Host having espied one of the other Merchants to have a Budget, wherein was good stock of money, (who lodged

in the same chamber where the young man lodged) thought with himself how he might get this Budget, & to live unsuspected: at last he devised with himself that having the money he would work so cunningly that none should be suspected but the young man. The host in the night came stealing away the Merchants budget with the money, & the young mans wallet, wherein was some foul lining, with shoes and such like, when this Host had opened the Merchants Budget & taken out the money, he found also in the same a Seal-ring and an obligation, which obligation & Seal ring, the Host took out, & with a Silver Tonne of his own whereon the Hosts mark was graven, & in which his guests did drink the night before at supper, he put these three in the young mans wallet, & tyed it up as it was before & entering the chamber again, laid the wallet in the place from whence he took it.

In the morning (the Host according to his promise, calls up the young man, who presently rising, made him ready, payed his reckoning, took his leave, and went his way on his journey having the Merchants Ring & obligation with the Hosts Silver Tonne tyed up in his wallet.

wallet unknown to him. So travelling
 on without any mistrust, it fortuned that
 the Marchant arising, and missing his
 Budget with his money, presently cal-
 led out, saying he was rob'd, hee being
 exceedingly perplexed and in a great su-
 rie. The Host (as if he had not known
 any thing) came speedilie unto him, de-
 manding the occasion of his outrage? to
 whom he reply'd that his budget with his
 money was stolen away from him. The
 Host answering, that if he had lost any
 thing, there was none could have it but
 the youth who lodged that night in his
 chamber, & was so sodainly gone away
 in the morning. Therefore let us with all
 speed take Horse, and we shall surely o-
 vertake him, whereupon with all hast
 that might be, the Marchant, with the
 treacherous Host, took their Horses, and
 in very short time thy overtook this
John Johnson. The host speaking very fu-
 riously unto him, charged him with fel-
 lony, saying, thou hast robbed this Mar-
 chant (who lay this night in the same
 chamber where thy self didst lodge) of
 all his money. The modest young man,
 at the first, being greatly affrighted, stood
 amazed, knowing himself without fault,
 answered, Truly. I am at clear from
 such

such offence, as any person in the world.
 Yet notwithstanding the Host was mar-
 vellous importunate to have the young
 mans wallet searcht, which being ope-
 ned, there appeared to their sight the
 Hosts silver Tonne, with the Marchants
 Obligation and Seal ring, which when
 the Marchant espied, he thought ve-
 rily that none had his money but he.
 The young man when he saw these
 things pulled out of his Wallet, almost
 dyed with grief excusing him'self that
 he never knew how they came into his
 wallet: But the Host vowed that he
 should be hanged, if it should cost him
 an hundred pound. So causing the youth
 to return back to *Bon*, they brought him
 before the Magistrates, who after his ex-
 amination, he still denying the fact, was
 committed to prison, put upon the rack
 & grivously tormented. The youth feel-
 ing this miserable pain cryed to God for
 aid, and voluntarily confest that he had
 done the deed, (although indeed he did
 it not.) Afterward being brought to the
 publick place of tryall, he was there ad-
 judged to be hanged for that offence.
 But when he perceived that he must
 needs dye the shamefull death, he la-
 menting

menting all his sinfull life past, which he had committed against the Majestie of Almighty God, he hoped to be saved in the faith he had in **JESUS CHRIST** his death. So being led to the place of execution, in the presence of all the beholders, said; I am here come to suffer death in this place & now in presence of you all, I take God to be my witness (& there-with wept most bitterly) that I never knew of the stealing either of the Merchants money, neither of the Hosts Silver Tonn, nor can any wise devise by what means they should come into my wallet; and in respect I am clear of this fact, for which I am here condemned to dye I do beseech Almighty God that if it will please him through his great power, to shew some miracle on me whereby the truth may be known & that all men may perceive that I suffered innocently: The people grieved much to hear him invocat the name of God, in that extremity, prayed also with him & lamented his tyme's death, if he were (as he said) without fault. So having ended his prayer, he was turn'd off the ladder & hanged. But the Lord having heard his prayers, & knowing his innocency, did most miraculously preserve him as here after you shall hear. His

His Uncle having ended all his business at *Francfort*, in the company of divers other Merchants, took their journey homewards towards *Antwerp*, and according to their wonted manner took their Inn (where before they were accustomed) at the sign of the *Syvan* in the Town of *Bon*.

In the morning following when those Merchants intended to depart from thence, the Host being amongst them, told them that there was a young man which vvas in their company the last time that they lodged there, who had robbed him of a silver Tonn which they used to drink in, & a Merchant (which lodged in his house) of a great Sum of money : for vvhich offense the young man vvas apprehended, and afterwards confest the fact, & then adjudged to be hanged, & this is now five days since he vvas executed, and still hanged on the Gallows without the Gates.

The young mans Uncle being stricken into a vvonderful admiration at this Speech, demanded of the Host vvhat manner of fellow he vvas vvich committed the Robbery? he being vvell assured that his Kinsman vvould not commit any such abuse: but by the Hosts

description in all things it was his Kinsman, whereupon, because he would be certain whether it was he or no, he earnestly requested the other Merchants which were with him, to take so much pains as to go with him to see him, for he could hardly yet believe it to be him.

And coming to the place where the young man hanged, so soon as he came near him, he espied him to be his Kinsman; at the sight whereof he suddenly fell down in a swoond; but the Merchants helping him up, comforted him with all their helps. Presently, the young man (there hanging) spake to his Uncle in this manner following,

O my loving and most dear Uncle, although I here hang most shamefully, yet am I not dead, for it hath pleased Almighty God to preserve me, by placing a stool under my Feet, which to you is not perceived; upon the which I stand, and the Angel of the Lord from Heaven hath fed me here five days. I beseech you take the pains to return to the Town of Bon, and certifie the Magistrates there, in what manner you have found me, and request them to come with you, & I will let them understand, that I am here hang-
ed

ed without any Offence. The Merchants hearing the young man speaking in this manner, were much astonished, & straightway departed from thence. And when they came before the Magistrats they before them upon their Oaths delivered what the young man had related unto them : whereat the Magistrats marvelled, and presently with the Merchants they went to the place where the young man did hang, and perceiving all to be true which the Merchants had reported unto them, they caused him to be presently taken down who was then in perfect health, although he had hanged five days.

But God, the defender of all that put their whole trust in his mercies, seeing this young mans innocency (to make his wondrous works to seem the more admirable, and to bring the truth to light) preserved him all this time, without any peril or danger.

Then the Magistrats (in the company of those merchants) having seen this miraculous work of the Lord, they brought this *John Johnson* into the Town, the Magistrate examined this Youth thoroughly of all doubts, who certified them of all the manner, first of his

his coming to such an Inn; then how he requested his Host to call him up in the morning, then of his departing, and afterwards how the Host with the Merchant came riding after him, and apprehended him: Which when they perceived, presently they sent for the Host to examine him upon the particulars, touching this young man. But, when the Host beheld the young man still to be alive, the Host presently confessed the Deed, and how he wrongfully accused that Youth of these Fellonies vvhich himself had committed. When those Magistrates heard all the truth of this business, they praised God for preserving this young man, and bringing to light this wretched offender. And so Sentence was pronounced upon this Host, that he should be convoyed to Prison, and the next day to be bound to a Stake near the place where the young man was hanged, and there to be burnt, which was accordingly performed. And I knoweys it was ordered by those Judges That the young man should possess to his own use, the Summ of three thousand *Gilders* of the Hosts

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money, in recompence of the injury which was done unto him.

After this Execution was finished, the young man with his Uncle and the other Merchants, taking their leaves of the Magistrats, departed towards *Antwerp*, where now this *John Johnson*, with his Uncle *Gerard Anthonyson* do at this day remain, near a place called the *Meere* or *Water*. Whosoever do repair to that place, may be an Eye-witness, and see the Party vvho was before executed ; as before is related.

THe Magistrats of *Bon* caused this to be Printed in sundry Languages, to set forth the mighty power and glory of GOD, as themselves were Witnesses thereof.

F I N I S :



REV. I. N. I. P.